

Exodus 22 - Thursday, February 26th, 2009

- Chapters 21-23 record for us what is called the Law of Moses, and, as we saw last week, may seem like there is no application to us.
- The fact of the matter is; that while these specific laws may not have direct application to us, they do have profound implication for us.
- In addition to this, let me also say that tonight's teaching is rated TV14 because of the mature subject matter addressed in this chapter.

1 "If a man steals an ox or a sheep, and slaughters it or sells it, he shall restore five oxen for an ox and four sheep for a sheep. 2 If the thief is found breaking in, and he is struck so that he dies, there shall be no guilt for his bloodshed. 3 If the sun has risen on him, there shall be guilt for his bloodshed. He should make full restitution; if he has nothing, then he shall be sold for his theft. 4 If the theft is certainly found alive in his hand, whether it is an ox or donkey or sheep, he shall restore double.

- In other words, if a thief steals an ox, he would have to pay back five ox, where as a sheep would require four, as ox produced income.
- This law is about a thief making restitution. Back then they didn't go to jail they had to pay back what they stole plus between 20-100%.
- We have an account of Zacchaeus referring to this civil law when he meets Jesus and wants to pay back four times the amount.

Luke 19:8 8 But Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, "Look, Lord! Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount." NIV

- In the event that they couldn't pay for the restitution, they had to be sold into slave labor and the money went to their victim as payment.
- One commentator suggests that the whole family of the thief were to be held responsible for paying the restitution. What a deterrent!

- In addition to that deterrent, the owner of the property had the right to protect himself by the use of force both by day and night.
- The thought here may be that if it were at night, the owner may not know if it was a thief or a murderer, but by day he could see better.

- This is a perfect example of this seemingly boring "Law of Moses," having no direct application, actually having a powerful implication.
- The implication is that the more deterrence and the restitution the less crimes and incarceration. God's way is always the better way.
- This may explain why America's crime rate is such that we can't build prisons fast enough. There's no deterrence and or restitution.

- Another implication is that the victim has rights. Before you think that this is a firm grasp of the obvious, think again. This is not the case.
- It's so bad that there are organizations devoted to ensuring that; "Victims Have Rights Too," implying that criminals have more rights.
- God is more concerned for the victims of the crime than He is for the perpetrator of the crime. I think we in America have it backwards.

"This concern for victims of crimes is almost completely lacking in our modern legal philosophy, which seems far more concerned with the rights of criminals than the rights of victims."

David Guzik, Calvary Chapel Siegen Germany

- It is absolutely baffling how far we've gone away from the principles in God's Word, to the point where now good is evil, and evil, good.
- I'm certain most of you know about the closing of the Guantanamo Bay prison. Do you realize it's all about the rights of these terrorists?
- The irony in all of this is that these worst of the worst incarcerated there have it really good, and they may even have it too good.

Detroit Free Press - Candice Miller finds Guantanamo conditions 'very humane' during visit, Tuesday, February 24th, 2009 - WASHINGTON – Raising concerns that the U.S. may not have a suitable place to put detainees now housed at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, if it is closed, U.S. Rep. Candice Miller says today that the conditions she found there during a visit Monday were "very humane."

<http://www.freep.com/article/20090224/NEWS15/90224076/1001/NEWS/Candice+Miller+finds+Guantanamo+conditions+%E2%80%98very+humane++during+visit>

5 "If a man causes a field or vineyard to be grazed, and lets loose his animal, and it feeds in another man's field, he shall make restitution from the best of his own field and the best of his own vineyard. 6 "If fire breaks out and catches in thorns, so that stacked grain, standing grain, or the field is consumed, he who kindled the fire shall surely make restitution. 7 "If a man delivers to his neighbor money or articles to keep, and it is stolen out of the man's house, if the thief is found, he shall pay double. 8 If the thief is not found, then the master of the house shall be brought to the judges to see whether he has put his hand into his neighbor's goods.

- This is very specifically dealing with the rights of someone's property, and the responsibility to respect what belongs to someone else.
- This law required that restitution be made whether by stealing or even by negligence, his animal started to graze off another man's field.
- Notice that the percentage of the restitution was already set so there couldn't be negotiation or arbitration. Legal matters were simple!

- This law actually has indirect application to us even now. We have to take responsibility in the case of damaging one's property.
- By way of example, if I back out of a parking lot and dent someone's car, I need to leave a note for them to contact me to pay for it.
- Also, I need to carry adequate insurance to pay for the damage and compensate the other party who was victimized by my negligence.

9 "For any kind of trespass, whether it concerns an ox, a donkey, a sheep, or clothing, or for any kind of lost thing which another claims to be his, the cause of both parties shall come before the judges; and whomever the judges condemn shall pay double to his neighbor. 10 If a man delivers to his neighbor a donkey, an ox, a sheep, or any animal to keep, and it dies, is hurt, or driven away, no one seeing it, 11 then an oath of the LORD shall be between them both, that he has not put his hand into his neighbor's goods; and the owner of it shall accept that, and he shall not make it good. 12 But if, in fact, it is stolen from him, he shall make restitution to the owner of it. 13 If it is torn to pieces by a beast, then he shall bring it as evidence, and he shall not make good what was torn.

- This enforces the principle that a man is considered innocent until proven guilty, and should be taken at his word until proven otherwise.
- This applies to us in the New Testament. We should take disputes amongst brethren to the church to be judged, not a secular court.

1 Corinthians 6:1-8 6:1 If any of you has a dispute with another, dare he take it before the ungodly for judgment instead of before the saints? 2 Do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if you are to judge the world, are you not competent to judge trivial cases? 3 Do you not know that we will judge angels? How much more the things of this life! 4 Therefore, if you have disputes about such matters, appoint as judges even men of little account in the church! 5 I say this to shame you. Is it possible that there is nobody among you wise enough to judge a dispute between believers? 6 But instead, one brother goes to law against another-and this in front of unbelievers! 7 The very fact that you have lawsuits among you means you have been completely defeated already. Why not rather be wronged? Why not rather be cheated? 8 Instead, you yourselves cheat and do wrong, and you do this to your brothers. NIV

14 "And if a man borrows anything from his neighbor, and it becomes injured or dies, the owner of it not being with it, he shall surely make it good. 15 If its owner was with it, he shall not make it good; if it was hired, it came for its hire.

- Again, though not directly, this applies to us as well. If I borrow my neighbor's car, and wreck it, guess what? I break it I pay for it!
- However, if I pay my neighbor to use his car and it's all busted up and on its last leg and breaks down on me. No need to pay him.
- Let me take this one a step further. If I borrow someone's car and it has a half a tank in it when I get it, I shouldn't bring it back empty.

16 "If a man entices a virgin who is not betrothed, and lies with her, he shall surely pay the bride-price for her to be his wife. 17 If her father utterly refuses to give her to him, he shall pay money according to the bride-price of virgins.

- We have obviously rounded a corner here and gone from property laws to moral laws and, as we'll see, ceremonial laws as well.
- This deals specifically with sex before marriage and is in keeping with the law God establishes as it relates to deterrence and restitution.
- If a man has sex with a woman, he must marry her and pay her dowry. If dad doesn't want him to marry his daughter, he still has to pay.

"This was an exceedingly wise and humane law, and must have operated powerfully against seduction and fornication; because the person who might feel inclined to take the advantage of a young woman knew that he must marry her, and given her a dowry"

Adam Clarke

- I think that I would be grossly remiss as the pastor of this church and a teacher of God's Word were I to not expound on this further.
- God's word is clear, living together, and having sex together before marriage is sin God's eyes, and God can't bless your relationship.

1 Corinthians 6:15-20 15 Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ himself? Shall I then take the members of Christ and unite them with a prostitute? Never! 16 Do you not know that he who unites himself with a prostitute is one with her in body? For it is said, "The two will become one flesh." 17 But he who unites himself with the Lord is one with him in spirit. 18 Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a man commits are outside his body, but he who sins sexually sins against his own body. 19 Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; 20 you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body. NIV

- Now is where we sort of round yet another corner and look at ceremonial laws that forbid certain practices as capital crimes.

18 "You shall not permit a sorceress to live.

- Sorcery was a capital crime and punishable by the death penalty. The meaning of sorcery in the New Testament implies drug usage.
- Witchcraft or sorcery in the original language of the New Testament Greek is "pharmakeia," where we get our English word pharmacy.
- In other words, there was a connection between the taking of mind altering drugs and the occultic practices and ceremonies.

19 "Whoever lies with an animal shall surely be put to death.

- I don't care to elaborate on this one for obvious reasons so suffice it to say that bestiality was a capital crime, and punishable by death.

20 "He who sacrifices to any god, except to the LORD only, he shall be utterly destroyed.

- At first glance, the death penalty for sacrificing and worshiping another god can seem harsh and disproportionate to the crime.
- However, upon further examination it is assumed that the individual has already sealed their fate and damned themselves.

21 "You shall neither mistreat a stranger nor oppress him, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt.

- This civil law forbids oppressing strangers, because the Israelites were once strangers themselves in the land of Egypt.

- I believe that one mark of a godly man or woman is how they treat strangers. We have a New Testament principle associated with this.

Hebrews 13:1-2 1 Let brotherly love continue. 2 Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares. KJV

22 "You shall not afflict any widow or fatherless child. 23 If you afflict them in any way, and they cry at all to Me, I will surely hear their cry; 24 and My wrath will become hot, and I will kill you with the sword; your wives shall be widows, and your children fatherless.

- The widow and the fatherless child are the weakest and most vulnerable, which is why God takes up their cause and even makes laws.

- God takes this serious, if one afflicts a widow or a fatherless child, He will kill them making their wives widows and children fatherless.

- We have a New Testament reference to this civil law dealing with the treatment of widows and the fatherless in the book of James.

James 1:27 27 Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world. KJV

25 "If you lend money to any of My people who are poor among you, you shall not be like a moneylender to him; you shall not charge him interest. 26 If you ever take your neighbor's garment as a pledge, you shall return it to him before the sun goes down. 27 For that is his only covering, it is his garment for his skin. What will he sleep in? And it will be that when he cries to Me, I will hear, for I am gracious.

- As the previous law dealt with the treatment of the widows and the fatherless so too does this law deal with the poor and the weak.

- Again, the implication is that God cares for the poor and the weak, and even has civil laws in place with how they are to be dealt with.

- This has to do with not charging interest on loans made to the poor, and the collateral taken to secure the loan had to be within reason.

28 "You shall not revile God, nor curse a ruler of your people.

- The newer translations correctly render God as judges. In other words, don't talk stink about those who are in authority over you.

- Why is this such a big deal to God? What if they are deserving of it? Because of both the implications and ramifications of doing it.

James 1:26 If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain. KJV

29 "You shall not delay to offer the first of your ripe produce and your juices. The firstborn of your sons you shall give to Me. 30 Likewise you shall do with your oxen and your sheep. It shall be with its mother seven days; on the Eighth day you shall give it to Me.

- This law has to do with tithing. Not just that we tithe, but when we tithe. In other words, don't delay the tithe, it needs to be the first.

- The argument has been made that tithing is Old Testament law and doesn't apply to us, however, tithing is pre-law.

Genesis 14:18-20 18 Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine. He was priest of God Most High, 19 and he blessed Abram, saying, "Blessed be Abram by God Most High, Creator of heaven and earth. 20 And blessed be God Most High, who delivered your enemies into your hand." Then Abram gave him a tenth of everything. NIV

31 "And you shall be holy men to Me: you shall not eat meat torn by beasts in the field; you shall throw it to the dogs.

- This one is interesting, and believed to deal with our behavior. In other words, don't be like the animals who are scavengers.

- The idea is that we should be holy, and act civilized. We are made in the image of God Who is holy, and we should be holy as He is.

- A child will act like their father, good or bad. Our heavenly Father is Holy, and the more we're with Him, the more we act like Him.